



Children's Safety at Risk

Safety organizations want use of device expanded despite criticism from unlikely opponents

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Arlington, VA – Childproofing your home just got a little easier for parents. The new *National Electrical Code*® calls for tamper-resistant receptacles to be installed in all newly constructed homes which will prevent the seven children a day who need hospital treatment for burns from electrical outlets each day. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), as part of its National Electrical Safety Month campaign in May, is highlighting tamper resistant receptacles and encouraging parents to adopt them into their homes whether new or old.

Most of the 2,400 injuries which occur each year are the result of small children placing ordinary household items such as keys, pins or paperclips into the outlets with disastrous consequences. A tamper-resistant receptacle works like any other electrical outlet except it has a built-in shutter system that prevents children from sticking objects into the slots, but allows plugs to be inserted and removed as usual. These outlets are so effective at preventing injuries that for over two decades hospitals have been required to use them.

Unfortunately, some parents may not benefit from this added protection. As states begin to adopt the new Code into law, important safety provisions are coming under attack from unlikely opponents. Home builders and similar groups have criticized tamper resistant receptacles claiming that the additional cost will make new homes unaffordable. In actuality, the total increased cost for the average new home is less than fifty dollars. Most parents say it is a small price to pay for piece of mind.

“The focus of the debate should be on child safety. The great thing about tamper-resistant receptacles is that they provide automatic and continuous protection for children,” says Brett Brenner, President of ESFI. “The new code requires them in all new homes, but owners of older homes can have them installed just as easily. For as little as \$2 an outlet, an older home can be a much safer place for children.”

More information on tamper-resistant outlets and other resources relating to National Electrical Safety Month 2008, including a checklist which identifies electrical dangers commonly found in homes, are available at www.electrical-safety.org.

The **Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI)** is dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety. Established in 1994, ESFI proudly sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May and focuses on reducing electrically related deaths, injuries and property loss. Funded solely by the industry, ESFI is the leading authority and advocate of electrical safety.

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